

influence and prestige of the League of Nations will suffer thereby."

On January 20th, 1931, M. Briand declared:—

"In the name of my country I conclude with the words which were used by our President in opening the session . . . I believe with you, and I have often had the chance of saying so, that the obligations which the nations contractually agreed upon when they signed Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations must not remain a dead letter. They represent a sacred pledge, and any country which should wish to shirk it would do so with dishonour to itself."

On February 27th, 1927, M. Vandervelde, Belgian Foreign Minister and Member of the Belgian Delegation at the Peace Conference declared:—

"From now on we are confronted with the following dilemma: The other Powers must either reduce their armies to a level with the German Reichswehr or the Peace Treaty will collapse and Germany will claim for itself the right to possess striking forces powerful enough to guarantee its territorial integrity. From this fact there are two conclusions to be drawn: that disarmament must be general or not at all."

The same Foreign Minister declared, on December 29th, 1930 as reported in the "*Populaire*":—

"The Versailles Treaty will become a 'scrap of paper' if the moral and legal obligations embodied in the Treaty are not fulfilled—those obligations which bound the defeated German nation to disarm as a preliminary to the disarmament of the others."

In his radio address of December 31st, 1930, Lord Robert Cecil said:—

"International disarmament is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of our national interests. Over and over again we have pledged ourselves to the reduction and limitation of the armaments of the victorious nations in return for the disarmament we imposed upon our enemies. If we disregard

these pledges we shall make enough scraps of paper to destroy all faith in international obligations. It is almost of minor importance, to my mind, that if we do not disarm we shall have no answer to a claim to rearm by Germany and the other ex-enemy countries."

Once again M. Paul Boncour declared, on April 26th, 1930, as reported in "*Le Journal*":—

"It is not necessary to prophesy. It suffices to keep one's eyes open in order to perceive that—in case disarmament negotiations are shattered—or even in case they are adjourned to a future date—Germany is rendered free from several obligations. She will get ready to rid herself of this obligation and will no longer submit to the disarmament which the Versailles Treaty laid down as a condition and also as a promise of 'all-round' disarmament. Then we shall have nothing left to say."

But what happened?

While Germany faithfully fulfilled the obligations which had been dictated to her in the Treaty, the victor states failed to fulfil their subsequent obligations.

If an attempt is made to-day to excuse this failure on various pretexts it is really not difficult to dispose of such excuses. We are amazed to hear from foreign statesmen that there was every intention of fulfilment but that there had not been time to carry out this intention.

What does that mean?

All the necessary conditions for the disarmament of the other states had then been completely fulfilled.

1. Germany had disarmed. They really could not assert that any danger threatened them from a state which had become completely helpless from a military point of view.

If on the other hand the other nations had disarmed this would have given such a tremendous moral strength to the League of Nations that no state could have dared to have had recourse to violence against a partner in this collective system of general disarmament afterwards.

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